MARVEL
DAREDEVIL
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR
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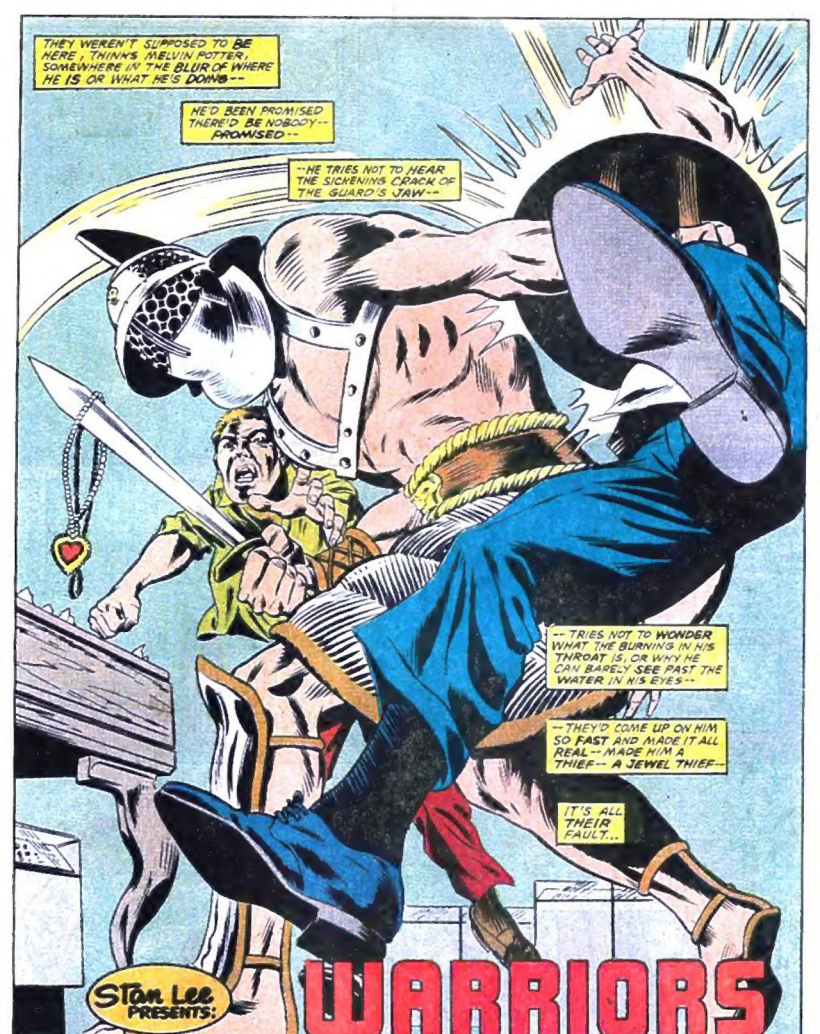
226
JAN
MAZZUCCHELLI



DENNY O'NEIL & FRANK MILLER / STORY | DAVID MAZZUCHELLI & DENNIS JANKE / ART | MAX SCHEELE / COLOR | JOE ROSEN / LETTERS | RALPH MACCHIO / EDITOR | JIM SHOOTER / EDITOR IN CHIEF

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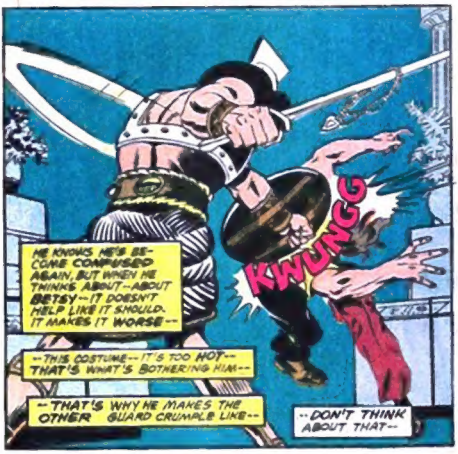
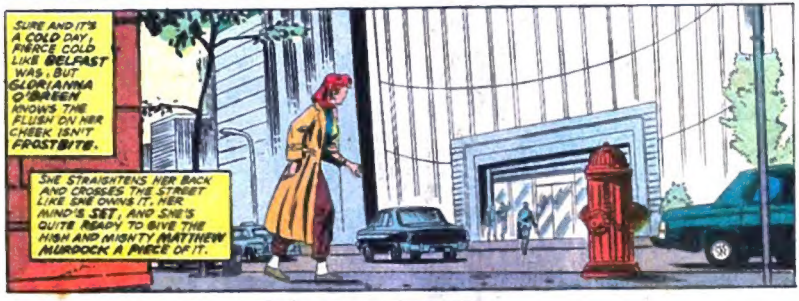

HE KNOWS HE'S BECOME COMPULSED AGAIN, BUT WHEN HE THINKS ABOUT--ABOUT BETSY--IT DOESN'T HELP LIKE IT SHOULD. IT MAKES IT WORSE--
KWUNGG
--THIS COSTUME--IT'S TOO HOT--THAT'S WHAT'S BOTHERING HIM--
--THAT'S WHY HE MAKES THE OTHER GUARD CRUMPLE LIKE--
--DON'T THINK ABOUT THAT--

--THIS COSTUME--SHOULD TAKE IT RIGHT BACK TO THE SHOP AND FIX IT--BAD MERCHANDISE--NO EXCUSE FOR BAD--MERCHANDISE--
--IT'S TOO HOT--AND HE NEEDS AIR--HE GRABS THE JE--
--DON'T THINK ABOUT THAT..


SURE AND IT'S A COLD DAY, FIERCE COLD LIKE BELFAST WAS, BUT GLORIANNA O'BREEN KNOWS THE FLUSH ON HER CHEEK ISN'T FROSTBITE.
SHE STRAIGHTENS HER BACK AND CROSSES THE STREET LIKE SHE OWNS IT. HER MIND'S SET, AND SHE'S QUITE READY TO GIVE THE HIGH AND MIGHTY MATTHEW MURDOCK A PIECE OF IT.

WHAT SHE ISN'T PREPARED FOR IS THE GLOOM THAT HANGS OVER THE LAW OFFICES OF NELSON & MURDOCK...
THICK IN THE AIR IT IS, A SENSE OF SADNESS AND DYING.
FOGGY--WHAT WOULD BE GOIN' ON HERE?

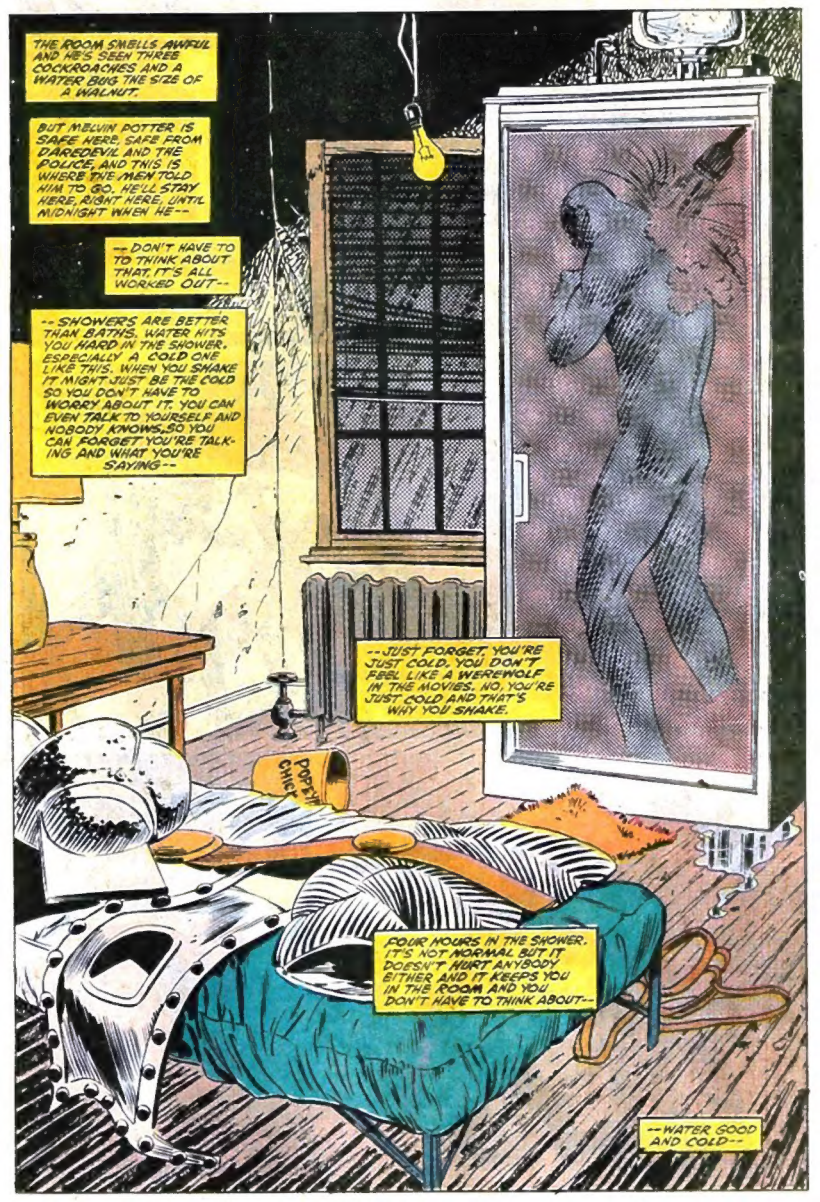
GLORY--HI--WE--
GOLLY--YOU LOOK--OOPS!

UM... GUESS YOU CAN TELL WE'RE CLOSING UP SHOP...
CLOSING UP...YE MEAN THE WHOLE OFFICE? OH, FOGGY I KNEW THERE WAS TROUBLE, BUT...
...OH, FOGGY... WHAT WILL YE DO?
HECK, GLORI... I'M LIKE A LUCKY PIECE OF TOAST...I ALWAYS LAND BUTTER SIDE UP!
YOU LOOKING FOR MATT?
DON'T BE TELLIN' ME HE ISN'T HERE... TODAY OF ALL DAYS...
FOGGY.. ON THE RADIO--
OH, HI, GLORI, FOGGY. THEY ARE SAYING THAT THE GLADIATOR JUST ROBBED A JEWELRY STORE! YOU DON'T THINK--
THE GLADIATOR? AW NO! NOT MELVIN!
WHO??
MELVIN-- MELVIN POTTER. USED TO BE A CLIENT OF OURS. BUT HE CAN'T HAVE! HE'S REFORMED!
HE WAS JUST SICK, THAT'S ALL. THEY CURED HIM--MATT AND THAT SOCIAL WORKER. IT'D BREAK MATT'S HEART IF...
NO. HE WAS CURED AND THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
SOMEBODY'S FRAMING HIM! YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE IN PEOPLE--
'SCUSE ME FOR RANTING, GLORI... WITH ALL THAT'S GOING WRONG LATELY, IT'S LIKE I DON'T HAVE MY BOAT FEET, YOU KNOW?
BOAT FEET?
FOGGY, SURE'N I'D UNDERSTAND IF YE TELL ME THIS ISN'T THE TIME...
...BUT COULD YE SEE FIT T'HAVE DINNER WITH ME? I'D LIKE TO TALK.
ABOUT YOUR PARTNER--AND WHATEVER IT IS THAT'S HAPPENED TO HIS MIND.

HE WAS RUNNING ACROSS THE ROOFTOPS WHEN IT HIT HIM.
HE WAS NOTICING HOW BEAUTIFULLY HE DANCED--AND YES, HE DIDN'T MIND FLAUNTING IT, IF ONLY TO HIMSELF. I'M TERRIFIC AT THIS, HE THOUGHT. I'M IN TERRIFIC SHAPE FOR MY AGE...
THAT WAS THE THOUGHT THAT STOPPED HIM COLD. CUTTING THROUGH THE GREY HAZE IN HIS HEAD.
FOR MY AGE, THINKS MATT MURDOCK. MY AGE.
I'M NOT EVEN THIRTY YET.
HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN DAREDEVIL? HOW LONG, EVEN SINCE THE WORLD THREW THAT ISOTOPE IN MY FACE, MAKING ME A BLIND MAN?
OH, SURE, I BUILT UP MY OTHER SENSES... THERE'S NOBODY WHO CAN SMELL OR HEAR LIKE I DO--BUT IT STRUCK ME BLIND, AND IT WASN'T THE LAST BAD THING TO STRIKE ME...
...ONE DISASTER AFTER ANOTHER, AND EVERYONE PUTTING THE BLAME ON ME. EVERYONE I LOVED OR TRUSTED.
FOGGY--MY PARTNER--COULDN'T PICK UP JUST A LITTLE SLACK AND KEEP THE LAW FIRM GOING AND HEATHER...
...YEAH, HEATHER--WHY BE AFRAID TO THINK OF HER NAME?--KILLED HERSELF... THIS ON TOP OF EVERYTHING ELSE I HAVE TO DEAL WITH...
...BUT THAT'S WHAT LIFE HAS TURNED INTO. ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER TO DEAL WITH.
HE FEELS THE CUT OF THE OCTOBER WIND. HEARS THE DULL THROB OF NEW YORK CITY BELOW. HIS NOSTRILS WRINKLE. HE WONDERS WHEN THE CITY STARTED MAKING HIM SICK.
THE CITY OF THINGS TO DEAL WITH.
THEN, HE'S GOT A MEMORY TO DEAL WITH--OF SOMETHING THAT HIS TEACHER TOLD HIM.
...THERE'S TWO SIDES TO YOU, PUNK--ONE STUDIES AND READS, THE OTHER TRAINS--AND FIGHTS.
PROBLEM IS, PUNK--AIN'T NEITHER OF THEM SIDES YOURS!

YOU DO WHAT YER DAD TOLD YOU--YOU DO WHAT I TELL YOU, EVEN THE WOMEN YOU LATCH ONTO --IT'S UP TO THEM TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT OR WRONG. YOU--YOU JUST OBEY.
STOP GRITTING YOUR TEETH. YOU'LL NEED THEM SOME DAY.
EVERYTHING'S UP TO SOMEBODY ELSE WITH YOU. SO SOMEBODY ELSE IS ALWAYS TO BLAME. YOU'LL NEVER BE WHAT YOU COULD BE--
'CAUSE YOU KNOW IN YOUR GUTS THAT IF YOU WERE, THERE'D BE NOBODY BIG ENOUGH TO PAT YOUR HEAD.
EVER HEAR OF GRACE, STICK? EVER THINK OF JUST ONCE GIVING ME A BREAK...
THE ELECTRIC SCREAM AND SQUEAL OF RUBBER CUT OFF HIS REPLY TO A MAN LONG DEAD--
EEEEEEEEE
--WITH SKILL THAT HAS BECOME REFLEX, HE GRABS HOLD OF HIS SUPER-HUMAN HEARING--HE AIMS IT--
--AT THE V-8 ENGINE THAT ROARS BENEATH HIM--AT THE GRATING VOICE OF A SQUAD CAR RADIO--
EEEEEEEEE
--ALL POINTS-- MELVIN POTTER --ARMED AND DANGEROUS--
NOT YOU TOO, MELVIN.
YOU PROMISED.
WORKED MY TAIL TO THE BONE FOR YOU...
...IF YOU'VE BETRAYED ME LIKE EVERYONE ELSE HAS...

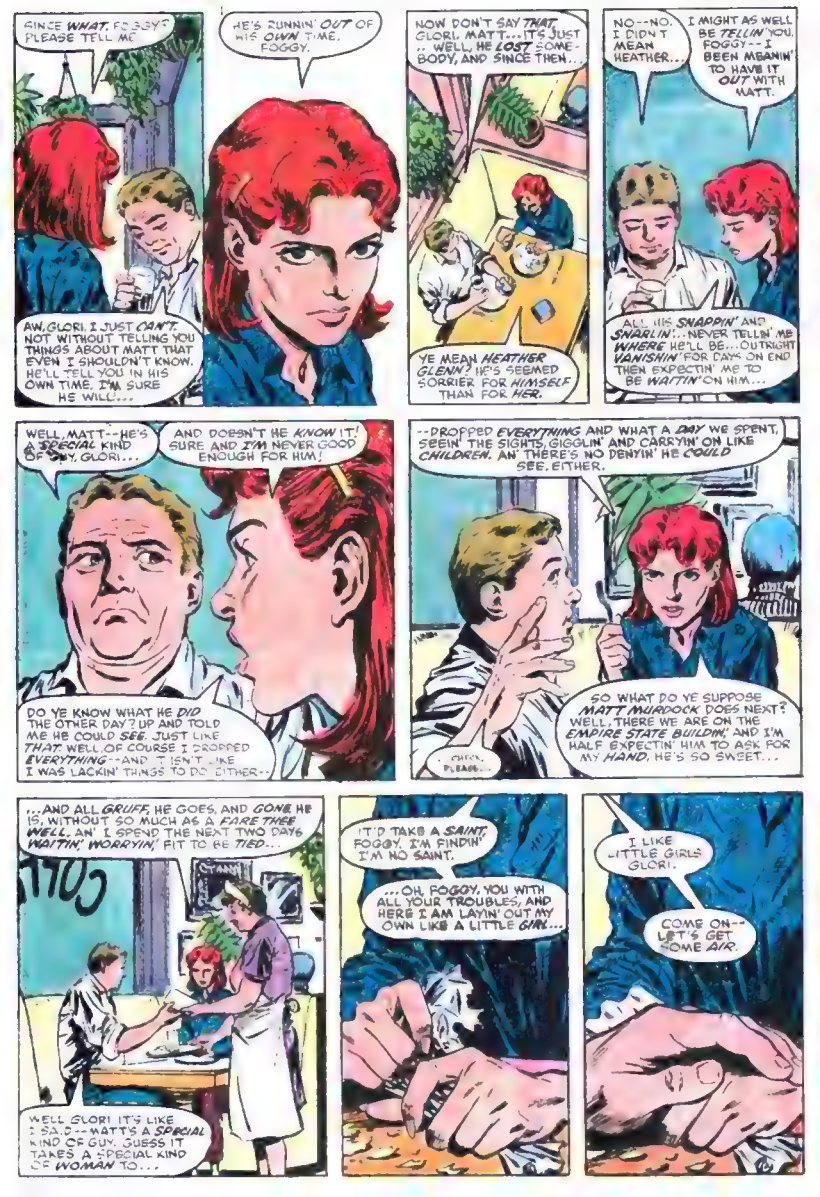
BETSY BEATTY IGNORES THE PAIN AND STARES OUT THE WINDOW AND STRAINS TO FIND A LANDMARK.
THEY MIGHT PUT HER ON THE TELEPHONE WITH MELVIN AGAIN. IF SHE KNOWS WHAT PART OF THE CITY SHE'S IN, SHE MIGHT GIVE HIM A CLUE.
THE ROPES ARE TIGHT AROUND HER, CUTTING OFF THE FLOW OF BLOOD TO HER FEET AND HANDS. SHE'D ASKED THEM TO LOOSEN THE ROPES, VERY POLITELY, AND THE SMALLEST ONE HAD PUNCHED HER IN THE STOMACH.
THEY WILL TAPE HER MOUTH SHUT IF SHE SPEAKS TOO LOUDLY OR TOO FREQUENTLY. SO SHE HAS BEEN QUIET, REMEMBERING EVERYTHING SHE HAS LEARNED ABOUT HANDLING SOCIOPATHS.
BUT NOW THE NEWS HAS COME OVER THE TV AND THE MEN ARE TALKING ABOUT CALLING MELVIN--AND IF THEY YELL AT HIM, ...BETSY BEATTY MAKES HER VOICE VERY CALM...
YOU'LL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL WITH MELVIN. HE'S UPSET. IF YOU MAKE HIM AFRAID--AND HE'S AFRAID OF YOU MEN, YOU CAN BE SURE OF THAT--
--BUT HE COULD GO OFF THE EDGE. THEN HE WON'T BE CAPABLE OF ANYTHING AS COMPLICATED AS ROBBERY...
...AND YOU WON'T GET THE REST OF THE MONEY YOU--
T'HWA
KK
WE SAY WHATEVER WE WANT TO THAT JERK: HE SCREWED UP ALREADY--PUTTING THAT COSTUME ON.
STUPID... LIKE HE WANTS DAREDEVIL ON HIS CASE.
YEAH, HE STUPID. BUT HE BETTER RAISE THAT MILLION. FOR HER SAKE.
MAN, HIT HER LIKE THAT AGAIN AND SHE WON'T HAVE NO SAKE...
BETSY BEATTY THINKS OF EVERY BATTERED WIFE SHE'S EVER HELD IN HER ARMS. EVERY WORD SHE'S EVER SAID TO THEM SEEMS IDIOTIC.
FROM A DISTANCE, ALMOST CLINICALLY, SHE FEELS HER TONGUE RUN ALONG THE GREAT RAW MASS IN HER MOUTH, INSPECTING, LOOKING FOR BROKEN TEETH.
IT COSTS SO MUCH TO GET A TOOTH REPAIRED.
THE CHRYSLER BUILDING LOOKS BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT.
SHE CAN SEE THE CHRYSLER BUILDING.
SHE CAN SEE THE CHRYSLER BUILDING... SO BETSY BEATTY KNOWS WHERE SHE IS.
BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ON HER MOUTH--!

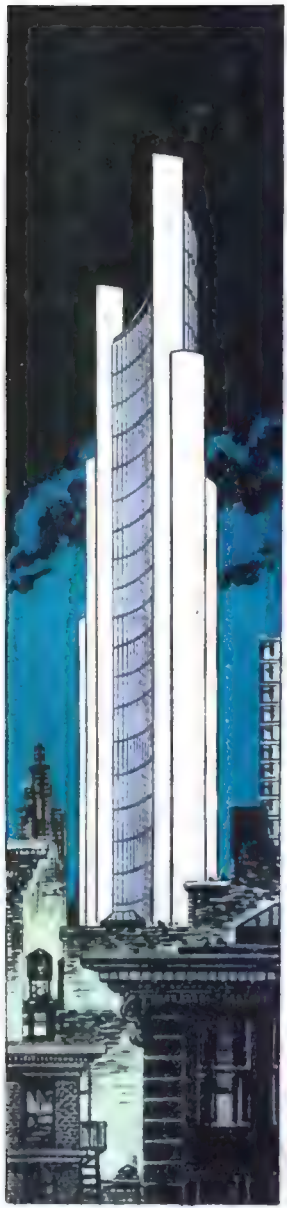

THE ROOM SMELLS AWFUL AND HE'S SEEN THREE COCKROACHES AND A WATER BUG THE SIZE OF A WALNUT.
BUT MELVIN POTTER IS SAFE HERE. SAFE FROM DAREDEVIL AND THE POLICE, AND THIS IS WHERE THE MEN TOLD HIM TO GO. HE'LL STAY HERE, RIGHT HERE, UNTIL MIDNIGHT WHEN HE--
--DON'T HAVE TO TO THINK ABOUT THAT, IT'S ALL WORKED OUT--
--SHOWERS ARE BETTER THAN BATHS. WATER HITS YOU HARD IN THE SHOWER. ESPECIALLY A COLD ONE LIKE THIS. WHEN YOU SHAKE IT MIGHT JUST BE THE COLD SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IT. YOU CAN EVEN TALK TO YOURSELF AND NOBODY KNOWS, SO YOU CAN FORGET YOU'RE TALKING AND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING--
--JUST FORGET. YOU'RE JUST COLD. YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE A WEREWOLF IN THE MOVIES. NO, YOU'RE JUST COLD AND THAT'S WHY YOU SHAKE.
POPEYE CHICK
FOUR HOURS IN THE SHOWER. IT'S NOT NORMAL BUT IT DOESN'T HURT ANYBODY EITHER AND IT KEEPS YOU IN THE ROOM AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT--
--WATER GOOD AND COLD--

IT'S GOOD AND DARK BY THE TIME HE REACHES POTTER'S COSTUME SHOP.
AND EVEN THIS CLOSE TO HALLOWE'EN, IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR THERE TO BE A GOOD REASON FOR THE NOISE COMING FROM THE BACK ROOM.
HE'S LOOKING FOR A CLUE -- SOMETHING TO SILENCE THE VOICE IN HIS HEAD THAT KEEPS SAYING MELVIN IS INNOCENT.
A CAT BURGLAR COULDN'T BREAK IN AS QUICKLY AS HE DOES --
-- A BLOOD-HOUND COULDN'T SO SWIFTLY IDENTIFY THE MEN BY THEIR SCENTS.
HE KNOWS THEM, EACH OF THEM. THEY'RE NO FRIENDS OF MELVIN.
BUT THEY'LL DO.
CHOK
CHAKK
THEY'LL DO.

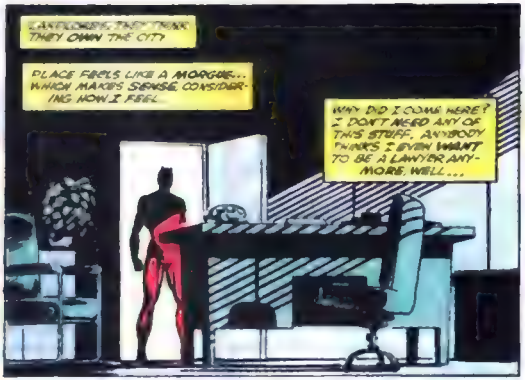
WHAMP
DAREDEVIL!
AW, GEEZ-- AW, NO--
AWW-- AAAA--
--AW, NO...
I'M LIMP, MAN. I SWEAR.
NOT AS LIMP AS YOU WILL BE, CHIGGER -- UNLESS YOU TELL ME POTTER'S PLAN.
SING TO ME, CHIGGER.
SING WHAT? STARS AN' STRIPES?
YOU KNOW ME, DEVIL--I'M A HEIST MAN. YOU HAVE APPREHENSED ME INNA COMMITMENT OF A HEIST. WHAT'S TO SING?
ANOTHER GIFT FROM LADY LUCK. ALL I DID WAS SAVE POTTER HIS HALLOWE'EN PROFITS.
WELL, I CAN'T WASTE ALL AFTERNOON ON MELVIN. I'VE GOT PROBLEMS OF MY OWN. LIKE CLEARING OUT MY DESK AT THE OFFICE BEFORE THE LANDLORD NAILS THE DOOR SHUT.
NOT THAT THAT WOULD STOP ME.

MEANWHILE, SOMEWHERE NORTH OF EIGHTY-SIXTH STREET...
I DO APPRECIATE YOU SEEIN' ME, FOGGY WITH ALL THAT'S LANDIN ON YOU. IT DOESN'T SEEM FAIR TO BE USIN' YOUR SHOULDER FOR MY CRYIN'...
COFFEE
COFFEE
CRAZY TIMES, HUH GLORI? BUT THEY'D HAVE TO BE A LOT CRAZIER FOR ME TO PASS UP A DATE WITH A PRETTY GIRL LIKE YOU. YES, SIR.
UH... DON'T TAKE THAT THE WRONG WAY...
YOU FLATTER ME, FOGGY. I DON'T MIND IT A BIT.
NOT A BIT.
COFFEE
MATT--ME AND MATT. WE USED TO EAT HERE ALL THE TIME. THAT WAS BACK IN COLLEGE--BEFORE THE PRACTICE AND THE MONEY AND ALL. BOY, THOSE WERE THE DAYS, I'LL TELL YOU.
YOU AND MATT. YOU GO BACK A WAYS, DON'T YOU?
AND THIS--THIS IS A CHEESEBURGER. GOOD A ONE AS YOU'LL FIND.
MET IN COLLEGE. COLUMBIA, RIGHT UP THE STREET. ROOMED TOGETHER THROUGH GRAD SCHOOL. MATT WAS THE WHIZ. NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. YOU READ HIM FOUR WORDS AND MATT HE'D DO YOU A SPEECH ON IT THAT'D MAKE JEFFERSON CRAWL UP OUT OF HIS GRAVE AND TAKE NOTICE.
Y'SEE, JEFFERSON WAS AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT. WROTE THE--
EVEN IN IRELAND WE HEARD OF JEFFERSON, FOGGY.
SPOSE YOU HAVE, COME TO THINK OF IT. ANYWAY, THE ONLY THING MATT WASN'T MUCH GOOD ON WAS THE DETAILS. NEVER HAD THE PATIENCE. THAT'S WHERE I CAME IN, WITH MY STEEL-TRAP MIND.
WAY I ALWAYS PUT IT. MATT WAS INSPIRATION, AND ME, I WAS PERSPIRATION...
HE'S LET YOU DOWN PRETTY ROUGH, HASN'T HE?
...HE'S HAD A LOT ON HIS MIND, GLORI. NEVER MIND ALL THAT STUFF I SAID LATELY. I JUST LET THINGS GET TO ME, TRUTH IS, I SAW ALL THIS COMING WHEN... I MEAN, MATT JUST HASN'T BEEN ALL THERE SINCE...

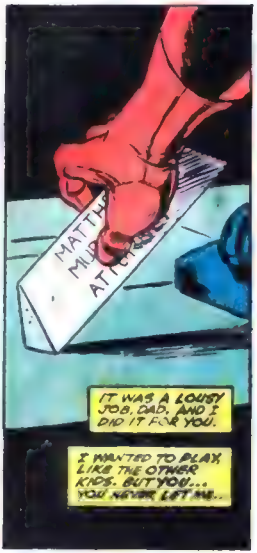

SINCE WHAT, FOGGY? PLEASE TELL ME
HE'S RUNNIN' OUT OF HIS OWN TIME, FOGGY.
AW, GLORI, I JUST CAN'T. NOT WITHOUT TELLING YOU THINGS ABOUT MATT THAT EVEN I SHOULDN'T KNOW. HE'LL TELL YOU IN HIS OWN TIME. I'M SURE HE WILL...
NOW DON'T SAY THAT, GLORI. MATT... IT'S JUST ... WELL, HE LOST SOMEBODY, AND SINCE THEN...
YE MEAN HEATHER GLENN? HE'S SEEMED SORRIER FOR HIMSELF THAN FOR HER.
NO--NO, I DIDN'T MEAN HEATHER...
I MIGHT AS WELL BE TELLIN' YOU, FOGGY--I BEEN MEANIN' TO HAVE IT OUT WITH MATT.
ALL HIS SNAPPIN' AND SNARLIN'... NEVER TELLIN' ME WHERE HE'LL BE... OUTRIGHT VANISHIN' FOR DAYS ON END THEN EXPECTIN' ME TO BE WAITIN' ON HIM...
WELL, MATT--HE'S A SPECIAL KIND OF GUY, GLORI...
AND DOESN'T HE KNOW IT! SURE AND I'M NEVER GOOD ENOUGH FOR HIM!
DO YE KNOW WHAT HE DID THE OTHER DAY? UP AND TOLD ME HE COULD SEE. JUST LIKE THAT. WELL, OF COURSE I DROPPED EVERYTHING--AND 'TISN'T LIKE I WAS LACKIN' THINGS TO DO, EITHER--
--DROPPED EVERYTHING AND WHAT A DAY WE SPENT, SEEIN' THE SIGHTS, GIGGLIN' AND CARRYIN' ON LIKE CHILDREN. AN' THERE'S NO DENYIN' HE COULD SEE, EITHER.
SO WHAT DO YE SUPPOSE MATT MURDOCK DOES NEXT? WELL, THERE WE ARE ON THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDIN', AND I'M, HALF EXPECTIN' HIM TO ASK FOR MY HAND, HE'S SO SWEET...
CHICK, PLEASE...
...AND ALL GRUFF, HE GOES, AND GONE HE IS, WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A FARE THEE WELL. AN' I SPEND THE NEXT TWO DAYS WAITIN' WORRYIN' FIT TO BE TIED...
WELL GLORI, IT'S LIKE I SAID--MATT'S A SPECIAL KIND OF GUY. GUESS IT TAKES A SPECIAL KIND OF WOMAN TO...
IT'D TAKE A SAINT, FOGGY. I'M FINDIN' I'M NO SAINT.
...OH, FOGGY, YOU WITH ALL YOUR TROUBLES, AND HERE I AM LAYIN' OUT MY OWN LIKE A LITTLE GIRL...
I LIKE LITTLE GIRLS GLORI.
COME ON--LET'S GET HOME AIR.



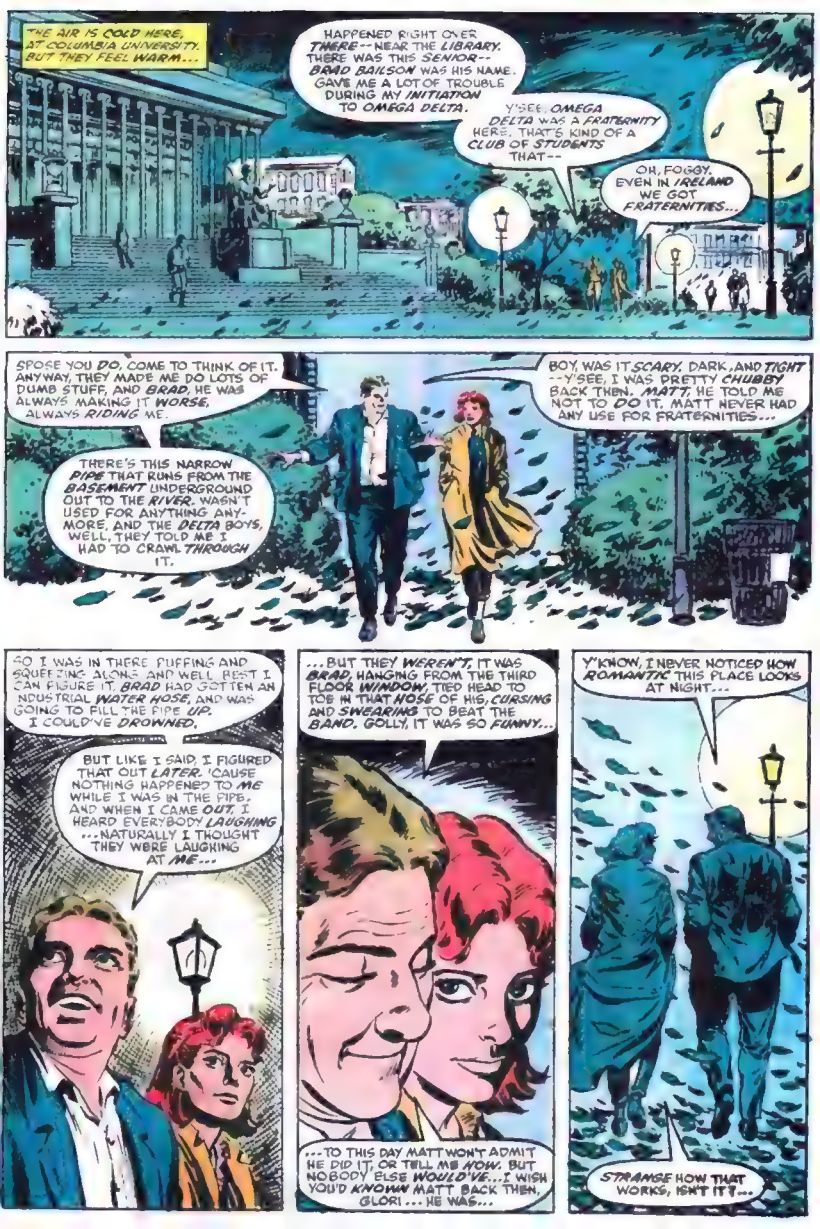
SPAKK
SO I NAILED SHIT! ME JUST CHANGED THE LOCKS.


LANDLORDS, THEY THINK THEY OWN THE CITY!
PLACE FEELS LIKE A MORGUE... WHICH MAKES SENSE, CONSIDERING HOW I FEEL...
WHY DID I COME HERE? I DON'T NEED ANY OF THIS STUFF. ANYBODY THINKS I EVEN WANT TO BE A LAWYER ANYMORE. WELL...

...WELL, I'D HAVE TO BE ASKED PRETTY NICELY, THAT'S FOR SURE.
I NEVER LIKED THIS JOB. HELPING CRIMINALS GET OFF THE HOOK... HELPING HUSBANDS AND WIVES WHO DON'T HAVE THE NERVE TO FACE EACH OTHER FIGHT OVER THEIR CHILDREN...


IT WAS A LOUSY JOB, DAD, AND I DID IT FOR YOU.
I WANTED TO PLAY LIKE THE OTHER KIDS. BUT YOU!... YOU NEVER LET ME...

"STUDY EVERY CHANCE YOU GET". "BE A DOCTOR OR A LAWYER"... "SOMEBODY IMPORTANT"... "BE THE SOMEBODY I NEVER COULD" ...STUDY STUDY STUDY STUDY...
...NO, YOU NEVER GAVE ME A BREAK, EITHER, DAD--
ALWAYS PUSHING ME--
SKRESSHHH
MATTHEW MURDOCK ATTORNEY
SO OF COURSE THE BURGLAR ALARM GOES OFF. PAID ENOUGH TO INSTALL IT.
LET IT RING. LET IT RING ALL NIGHT.
EEEE
EEEE
EEEEEEE EEEEEE


THE AIR IS COLD HERE, AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY. BUT THEY FEEL WARM...
HAPPENED RIGHT OVER THERE--NEAR THE LIBRARY. THERE WAS THIS SENIOR--BRAD BAILSON WAS HIS NAME. GAVE ME A LOT OF TROUBLE DURING MY INITIATION TO OMEGA DELTA.
Y'SEE, OMEGA DELTA WAS A FRATERNITY HERE. THAT'S KIND OF A CLUB OF STUDENTS THAT--
OH, FOGGY. EVEN IN IRELAND WE GOT FRATERNITIES...
SPOSE YOU DO, COME TO THINK OF IT. ANYWAY, THEY MADE ME DO LOTS OF DUMB STUFF, AND BRAD, HE WAS ALWAYS MAKING IT WORSE, ALWAYS RIDING ME.
THERE'S THIS NARROW PIPE THAT RUNS FROM THE BASEMENT UNDERGROUND OUT TO THE RIVER. WASN'T USED FOR ANYTHING ANYMORE, AND THE DELTA BOYS, WELL, THEY TOLD ME I HAD TO CRAWL THROUGH IT.
BOY, WAS IT SCARY. DARK, AND TIGHT--Y'SEE, I WAS PRETTY CHUBBY BACK THEN. MATT, HE TOLD ME NOT TO DO IT. MATT NEVER HAD ANY USE FOR FRATERNITIES...
SO I WAS IN THERE PUFFING AND SQUEEZING ALONG, AND WELL BEST I CAN FIGURE IT, BRAD HAD GOTTEN AN INDUSTRIAL WATER HOSE, AND WAS GOING TO FILL THE PIPE UP. I COULD'VE DROWNED.
BUT LIKE I SAID, I FIGURED THAT OUT LATER. 'CAUSE NOTHING HAPPENED TO ME WHILE I WAS IN THE PIPE. AND WHEN I CAME OUT, I HEARD EVERYBODY LAUGHING ...NATURALLY I THOUGHT THEY WERE LAUGHING AT ME...
...BUT THEY WEREN'T. IT WAS BRAD, HANGING FROM THE THIRD FLOOR WINDOW, TIED HEAD TO TOE IN THAT HOSE OF HIS, CURSING AND SWEARING TO BEAT THE BAND. GOLLY, IT WAS SO FUNNY...
...TO THIS DAY MATT WON'T ADMIT HE DID IT, OR TELL ME HOW. BUT NOBODY ELSE WOULD'VE...I WISH YOU'D KNOWN MATT BACK THEN, GLORI... HE WAS...
Y'KNOW, I NEVER NOTICED HOW ROMANTIC THIS PLACE LOOKS AT NIGHT...
STRANGE HOW THAT WORKS, ISN'T IT?...

I GET ANOTHER LESSON IN INGRATITUDE ON MY WAY HOME. CATCH A JUNKIE PULLING A KNIFE ON SOME WOMAN AND GIVE IT TO HIM, HARD ENOUGH SO HE MIGHT THINK TWICE THE NEXT TIME
SO WHAT'S THE WOMAN DO? YOU'D THINK I'M DRACULA THE WAY SHE SCREAMS
I DON'T KNOW WHY I BOTHER
MAYBE IT'S STUPID COMING IN THROUGH MY WINDOW IN FULL VIEW OF THE HUDDLED MASSES. MAYBE I SHOULD'VE USED MY SKYLIGHT ENTRANCE. MAYBE I CARE
MY ANSWERING MACHINES HUMMING LIKE A MOSQUITO, TELLING ME I'VE GOT SOME MESSAGES WAITING. I ALMOST DON'T CHECK IT WHO NEEDS THE GRIEF.
WELL, IT MIGHT BE SOME GOOD NEWS, SURE AND CHRISTMAS MIGHT COME TWICE THIS YEAR
BEEP MATT, THIS IS GLORY AGAIN I... OH, NEVER MIND. KLIK
OOOH COLD
ONE MESSAGE SEEN GONE ALL DAY AND ONE LOUSY MESSAGE
THEN IT RINGS LIKE AN OLD WOMAN YELLING. I JUST LEAVE THE MACHINE RUNNING. IT'S MY RIGHT
RING
BESIDES, I JUST DON'T FEEL LIKE DEALING WITH FOGGY OR GLORY OR.
YOU AND THE REST OF THE WORLD. ALWAYS COMING TO ME...
...MELVIN MR. MURDOCK MELVIN POTTER... UM... I... I NEED HELP...
I KNOW YOU KNOW DAREDEVIL ...UM... AND... IF YOU COULD ASK HIM TO... TO COME TO THE DIBNEY MUSEUM... I NEED... I DON'T WANNA...
...NO, DON'T TELL HIM THAT ...JUST SAY I'M... I'M SORRY ...KLIK
SORRY, ARE YOU MELVIN? AFTER A... I'VE DONE FOR YOU

...I'LL LEAVE YOU A WHOLE LOT WORSE THAN SORRY.
IT'S ALMOST AN HOUR BEFORE MELVIN MAKES IT TO THE MUSEUM, SOMEHOW BUMBLING THROUGH THE LOCKS AND PAST THE ALARMS, MOVING WITH ALL THE GRACE OF YOUR AVERAGE COW...
...SANDALS SCUFFING ON THE TILE FLOOR...
...BREATHING LIKE A BELLOWS...
...STILL MUMBLING HOW SORRY HE IS...
...AND SHOWING THE DEPTH OF HIS SORROW...
...BY STEALING THE MOST EXPENSIVE GEMS IN THE HOUSE.
GOT YOUR MESSAGE, MELVIN.
AND, JUST IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING, THE ANSWERS ARE NO, AND YES.
NO, I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOUR EXCUSES-- AND YES, I'M HERE TO KICK YOUR ASS IN.

HE GRUNTS LIKE A WOUNDED LION--YOU'D THINK IT WAS ME WHO BETRAYED HIM.
HIS HEART GOES INTO OVERDRIVE--IT'S A CINCH HE HASN'T KEPT IN SHAPE. HE BREAKS A COLD, PANICKY SWEAT. HE'S SCARED, READY TO RUN AWAY.
SO I GIVE WITH A CHUCKLE.
THAT GETS HIM STEAMED ENOUGH TO CHARGE--BUT NOT ENOUGH TO STOP WHINING.
I DON'T WANT THIS...
KLUDD
I DO
SPANGG
Y' SHOULDN'T--
--SHOULDN'T OUGHT TA--IT AIN'T RIGHT--
THWOKK

FINALLY GOT A RISE OUT OF HIM -- HE SHUTS UP AND GETS TO IT..
--MOVES ON ME LIKE A LOCOMOTIVE--
I MAKE LIKE A SPEEDING BULLET.
WHOKK
CHUKK
THWAKK
TOO EASY -- MAYBE HE ISN'T WARMED UP --
--I'M STILL WAITING TO BREAK A SWEAT MYSELF--
FAPPP
-- NO, HE'S WARMED UP ALL RIGHT -- BRINGING ONE UP FROM THE FLOOR --
--I COULD BE ACROSS THE ROOM IN THE TIME IT TAKES HIS FIST TO REACH MY JAW--
--I LET IT HIT ME JUST TO SEE WHAT'S IN IT--
--I HEAR THE SHIELD WAFFLE THROUGH THE AIR TOWARD MY MID-SECTION--
-- HE'S BREATHING LIKE AN ASTHMATIC--
-- HE'S GIVING IT EVERYTHING HE'S GOT--
--AND WHAT HE'S GOT IS NOTHING.
FUDD

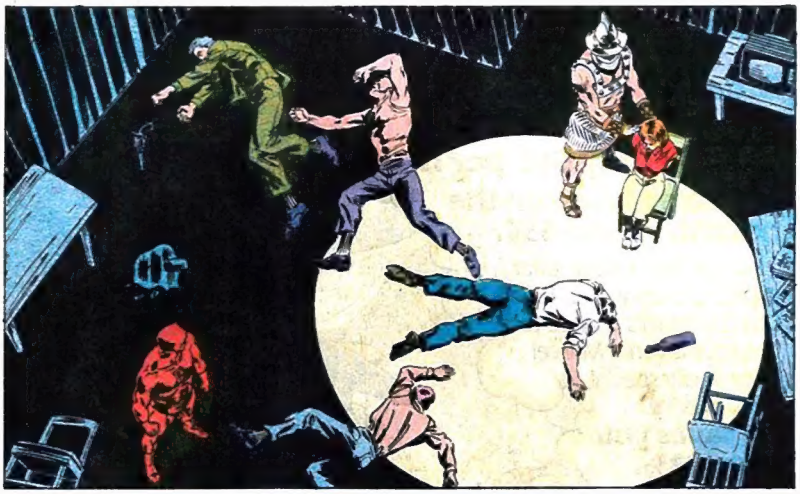
KRAKK
THAT SHOULD'VE TAKEN HIS HEAD OFF -- BUT AT LEAST IT GOT HIM MAD.
SKRAKK
MAD AS AN OX. ALSO, SMART AS, FAST AS...
I STRETCH IT OUT A LITTLE LONGER THAN I NEED TO, HOPING HE'LL GET IT TOGETHER.
BUT HIS FIRE'S GONE. BEEN GONE FOR YEARS.
HE'S FORGOTTEN TOO MUCH. SLOWED DOWN TOO MUCH.
I GET BORED AND LET THE WAVES OUT -- MY OWN PRIVATE RADAR. I DRAW A PICTURE OF MY MIND OF HIM, LUMBERING AT ME LIKE AN AMATEUR.
FOUR WAYS TO TAKE HIM OUT.
KLUNGGG
I USE THE PILLAR.

HE LIES THERE, CRYING, HUGGING THE PILLAR LIKE IT'S HIS MOTHER--
--AND I GO ALL COLD INSIDE, THINK OF THE HELL'S KITCHEN DUNKS WHO MADE MY CHILDHOOD A NIGHTMARE--
--TRYING TO FIND A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT THEY DID TO ME--
...NO MORE ...PLEASE...
--AND WHAT I'VE JUST DONE TO MELVIN POTTER.
...CAN'T BLAME YOU... I'M BAD...
...BUT I BEEN SO SCARED, DEVIL... THEY'RE HOLDING BETSY... KOFF... GONNA KILL HER...
...SAID I HADDA STEAL A MILLION OR THEY'D KILL HER...
I ALMOST ASK HIM WHY HE DIDN'T COME TO ME.
I CAN'T HELP SHUDDER WHEN I REALIZE HE DID.
COULDN'T EVEN PUT THE COSTUME ON... THE OLD ONE I MEAN... TRIED TO AND GOT ALL SICK...
YOU WANNA LOCK ME UP, DEVIL, YOU GO STRAIGHT AHEAD--
--BUT HELP BETSY.
I BEG YOU.
HE BREAKS-- LIKE BIG MEN DO, SEEMING TO CAVE IN ON HIMSELF.
I FEEL THE FOG LIFT FROM MY BRAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE...
THE UGLY FEELING IN MY GUT IS SHAME.
IT'S UP TO ME TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT.

MELVIN GIVES ME THE DETAILS ON THE PICK-UP. I SEND HIM HOME AND TELL HIM NOT TO WORRY ABOUT THE COPS.
A FEW HOURS LATER, A NASTY WIND WHIPS ACROSS THE PAVEMENT UNDERNEATH THE WEST SIDE HIGHWAY...
...A BOTTLE POPS, LOUDLY, CRUSHED BY A RUBBER TIRE...
...QUICK, NERVOUS FOOTSTEPS ECHO AGAINST THE DISTANT ROAR OF THE LIVING PARTS OF THE CITY...
...A FULL-GROWN MAN GIGGLES LIKE A GIRL...
FORTY MINUTES PASS.
RRING
HULLO?
YOU WANT A PIECE OF THEM, MELVIN?
MEET ME AT SPRING AND MERCER.
HE PAUSES, STARTLED. THE LINE CRACKLES BY ITSELF FOR A SECOND OR TWO.
WHEN HE AGREES, IT'S LIKE HE'S DOING ME A FAVOR.

I THOUGHT HE'D APPRECIATE THE GESTURE. I KNOW WHAT I'D WANT, IF I WAS HIM.
THEY'RE CLOSE TO KILLING HER WHEN WE ARRIVE...
KRAK
WH--
OH, MAN--
OH, NO--
MELVIN GASPS--I FEEL THE AIR CHARGE UP BEHIND ME--AND WHEN HE SPEAKS--
WORM...
THWAKK
-- HE SOUNDS LIKE HE HASN'T SOUNDED IN A LONG TIME...
...NOT SINCE THE LAST TIME HE KILLED SOMEBODY.
WORM--

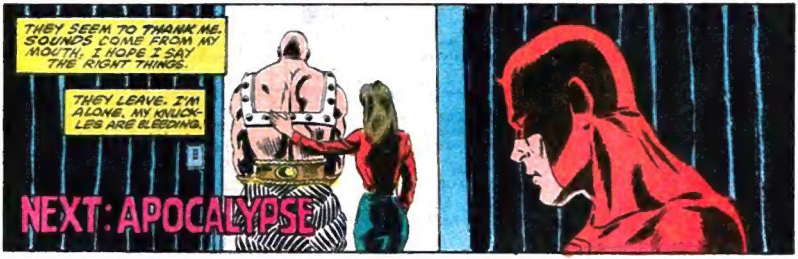
I'M EXPECTING TO HEAR THE CRUNCH OF BONE-- AND WORKING MY WAY CLEAR TO STOP HIM--
--BUT HE JUST SIGHS-- THAT'S RIGHT. SIGHS--
--AND THROWS THE GUY AWAY LIKE OLD FOOD.
HE DOESN'T WALK LIKE A KILLER...
CHOKK
SKRAKK
...OR LIKE THE LUMBERING APOLOGY HE'S BEEN...
...HE WALKS LIKE A MAN --A BIG MAN...
WHUDD
...WALKS TO THE WOMAN HE LOVES.
BETSY.



ME, I'M READY FOR MORE--BUT THERE'S NOBODY LEFT.
FOR SOME REASON THERE'S A POUNDING IN MY HEAD. IT DROWNS THEIR VOICES. THEY SEEM SO FAR AWAY.

I TRY TO LISTEN... HER VOICE IS SOFT AND PROUD...

...THERE MAY BE GUILT IN HIS, BUT IT'S A DEEP VOICE, STRONG AND SURE.


THEY SEEM TO THANK ME. SOUNDS COME FROM MY MOUTH. I HOPE I SAY THE RIGHT THINGS.
THEY LEAVE. I'M ALONE. MY KNUCKLES ARE BLEEDING.
NEXT: APOCALYPSE